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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/945,469	08/30/2001	Ryan Matthew LaSalle	05222.00130	3240

29638 7590 12/23/2003

BANNER & WITCOFF AND ATTORNEYS FOR ACCENTURE
10 S. WACKER DRIVE, 30TH FLOOR
CHICAGO, IL 60606

EXAMINER

BORISSOV, IGOR N

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3629

DATE MAILED: 12/23/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/945,469

Applicant(s)

LASALLE ET AL.

Examiner

Igor Borissov

Art Unit

3629

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 03 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 September 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

Claim 35 is objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 35 appears to include the content of **claim 36**, the numeration of which is omitted.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 35 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

As per claim 35, it is confusing because it recites both the limitations of method steps and computer-readable medium.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 21 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tarrant (US 2002/0128939).

Tarrant teaches a method and system for sharing investor information over an electronic network, comprising:

As per claims 1, 21 and 23,

a) an inquiry receiving component for receiving an inquiry from the seeking entity ([0018] – [0022]);

b) a means for receiving a response indicating an existing relationship between the sought entity and an intermediate entity ([0018] – [0022]; [0026]; [0038]);

c) a means which appears to be indicative of availability of establishing new relationship based on the response, the response is being indicative of a trust level about the sought entity by the intermediate entity ([0018] – [0022]; [0038]).

Tarrant does not specifically teach that said means, which appears to be indicative of availability of establishing new relationship based on said response, includes a confirming component for confirming availability of establishing said new relationship based on said response.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant to include that said means which appears to be indicative of availability of establishing new relationship includes a confirming component for confirming said availability, because it appears that the claimed features do not distinguish the invention over similar features in the prior art, and the teachings of Tarrant would perform the invention as claimed by the applicant with either specifically teaching said confirming component, or not.

Claims 2-12, 22, 24, 29-30 and 35-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tarrant (US 2002/0128939) in view of Krysiak et al. (US 2002/0078003).

As per claims 2-12, 22, 24, 29-30 and 35-36, Tarrant teaches all the limitations of claims 2-12, 22, 24, 29-30 and 35-36, except for specifying the degree of separations between the entities.

Krysiak et al. teach a method and system for identifying information sources based on one or more trust networks associated with one or more knowledge domains, wherein the multiple path connections is provided for identifying the most trusted path connection (Figs. 11-14; [0070] – [0076]).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant to include identifying multiple path connections because it would allow users to collect the most trusted information about sought entity.

Also, **as per claim 35,** Tarrant and Krysiak et al. do not specifically teach forwarding a “Do You Know” query to further companies.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant and Krysiak et al. to include forwarding a “Do You Know” query to further companies, because without explaining in the specification the specific advantage of this feature, it appears that this feature does not distinguish the invention over similar features in the prior art, and the teachings of Tarrant and Krysiak et al. would perform the invention as claimed by the applicant with either specifically teaching forwarding said query, or not.

Claims 13-20, 25-28, 31-34 and 37-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Tarrant and Krysiak et al. in view of Smith et al. (US 2002/0152086).

As per claims 13-20, 25-28, 31-34 and 37-39, Tarrant and Krysiak et al. teach all the limitations of claims 13-20, 25-28, 31-34 and 37-39, including a data base having a plurality of levels of trust (Tarrant; [0018]), except for plurality of entity roles, wherein each respective role in the plurality of roles defines a respective function that one entity fulfills to another entity.

Smith et al. teach a method and system for controlling a lifestyle of an electronic contract for a business relationship, wherein roles are associated with business relationship elements [0018].

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant and Krysiak et al. to include associating roles with business relationship so that each respective role defines a respective function that one entity fulfills to another entity, because it would encrease the degree of trust of users in conducting business over the computer network using a mechanism that tie the business relationship to terms and conditions of a legal contract (Smith et al. [0007]).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 09/30/03 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to the applicant's argument that Tarrant does not disclose a confirming component for confirming, based on the response, that the new relationship may be established, examiner points out that Tarrant does disclose means for receiving a response indicating an existing relationship between the sought entity and an intermediate entity, wherein said response being indicative of the trust level about the sought entity by the intermediate entity, said means appear to be indicative of availability of establishing new relationship (See: [0018] – [0022]; [0038] and discussion above).

In response to the applicant's argument that Tarrant does not teach a transactional trust list, examiner stipulates that Tarrant, in fact, does teach this feature (See: Tarrant; [0019]; [0110]; [0132]).

In response to the applicant's argument that Tarrant in view of Krysiak et al. do not teach a data base having a plurality of levels of trust, examiner points out that Tarrant specifically teach this feature (See: [0018] and discussion above).

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not

Art Unit: 3629

mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Igor Borissov at telephone number (703) 305-4649.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 872-9306.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's Supervisor, John Weiss, can be reached at (703) 308- 2702.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

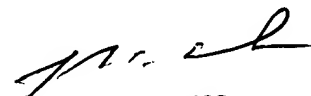
Washington D.C. 20231

or faxed to:

(703) 872-9306 [Official communications; including After Final
communications labeled "Box AF"]

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park 5, 2451 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA, 7th floor receptionist.

IR


JOHN G. WEISS
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